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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND COORDINATION
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Agenda item 6

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE SECOND PART OF ITS THIRTY-THIRD SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Wolfgang STÖCKL (Germany)

II. PROGRAMME QUESTIONS

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995

Section 3. Political affairs

1. At its 18th meeting, on 11 October 1993, the Committee considered section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.

Discussion

2. In the course of the debate, overall questions on the section were raised by delegations relating to the rationale for the proposed increase in staff for the Department of Political Affairs. The view was expressed that the need for additional staff in some areas of activity could adequately be met through redeployment of staff. Other delegations were of the opinion that the proposed increase in staff was well justified, especially in respect of servicing of the Security Council and its subsidiary organs, in connection with the Arms Register. Some delegations drew attention to certain inconsistencies in the designation of priority in the proposed programme of work, noting that while the revised medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 designated priorities at the subprogramme level, the programme of work proposed under section 3, Political affairs, with the exception of programme 6, Elimination of apartheid, identified in several instances priority at the level of activities. The problem therefore of priority designation, although having been discussed repeatedly, appeared to

be a recurring one. Several delegations questioned the need for the level of resources proposed for consultants and official travel. Attention was also drawn to the lack of transparency in the presentation of extrabudgetary resource requirements since the use of funds expected to be made available had not been indicated in an unequivocal manner.

3. Specific questions on the various subsections of section 3, Political affairs, namely: 3A. Policy-making organs; 3B. Department of Political Affairs I; 3C. Department of Political Affairs II; and 3D. Outer space affairs, were as follows:

(a) Section 3A. Policy-making organs

4. One delegation suggested that publication of the Official Records of the Security Council might be undertaken in a less expensive way, possibly using the internal capabilities of the Secretariat.

5. Several delegations proposed that paragraph 3A.16 should be expanded to include the list of the 18 Territories considered as Non-Self-Governing Territories.

(b) Section 3B. Department of Political Affairs I

6. A number of delegations expressed concern over the resource level allocated to the servicing of the Security Council subsidiary bodies. In this respect they stressed their disappointment with the delays in processing the applications addressed to the Security Council sanctions committees. They have requested further increases of staff and resources to meet this objective.

7. Some other delegations voiced their concern over the inclusion, in the proposed programme of work, of references to statements by the President of the Security Council, referred to, inter alia, in paragraph 3B.4, as these statements, in the opinion of that delegation, constituted legislative mandates only when approved by the competent intergovernmental bodies.

8. In connection with the proposed allocation of resources to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and to three regional disarmament centres, several delegations expressed their concern about continued support to extrabudgetary activities from the regular budget. One delegation supported the proposed conversion of the post of the Director of the Regional Disarmament Centre for Asia and the Pacific from its current temporary status to an established post.

9. Several delegations supported the proposed increase in the Disarmament Fellowships programme.

(c) Section 3C. Department of Political Affairs II

10. Several delegations expressed their support for the activities proposed to be carried out under subprogramme 4, Enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of periodic and genuine elections, and called for the enhancement of the capacity for assistance to the electoral process. Several other delegations

questioned the legislative mandate for entrusting the resident coordinator with follow-up activities for electoral procedures, referred to in paragraph 3C.37.

11. Some delegations, while referring to positive political developments that had been taking place in South Africa as well as in the Middle East, expressed the need for the resources allocated to programme 5, Question of Palestine, and programme 6, Elimination of apartheid, to be kept under review. However, several other delegations were of the opinion that resources at the proposed level should continue to be provided to implement activities under these programmes until political negotiations under way culminated in concrete and final arrangements.

12. Several delegations were of the view that General Assembly resolution 47/120 A, section II, should have been cited in paragraph 3C.9 as one of the mandates for implementing the activities of subprogramme 1, Good offices, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking, of programme 1. One delegation expressed concern over some of the contemplated activities within paragraph 3C.14 from the point of view of their conformity with the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of Member States.

13. A number of delegations questioned the programme of work and the resulting resource requirements proposed for subprogramme 3, Trusteeship and decolonization of programme 5, and the Trusteeship Council and the Special Committee of 24, feeling that savings were possible in this area. Some other delegations supported the activities of the Committee of 24 as the appropriate forum for the exchange of views regarding decolonization issues.

(d) Section 3D. Outer space affairs

14. Several delegations questioned the need for inclusion in the programme of work of the Office for Outer Space Affairs a reference to a third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, while other delegations supported such a reference.

15. Some delegations expressed concern about a cumulative backlog in the activities of the United Nations Space Applications Programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

16. The Committee noted with concern that the format of the narrative of the section and of the formulation of the objectives as well as the explanation of the extrabudgetary resources were not in accordance with resolution 47/213 of 23 December 1992. The Committee expressed dismay about the fact that the Secretariat has not implemented this aspect of resolution 47/214 of 23 December 1992.

17. The Committee recommended that the first sentence of paragraph 3A.16 should be revised to read:

"There are currently 18 Territories on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, namely: American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, East Timor, Falkland Islands (Malvinas), Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the United States Virgin Islands and Western Sahara."

18. The Committee recommended that the end of last sentence of paragraph 3C.9 should be revised, after the words "General Assembly", to read "the most recent of which are its resolutions 47/64 D of 11 December 1992 and 47/120 A of 18 December 1992" in order to cite properly the mandates for implementing the activities of subprogramme 1, Good offices, preventive diplomacy and peacemaking, of programme 1. It also recommended that the legislative mandate for subprogramme 3 (resolution 1514 (XV) and others contained in the medium-term plan) be added to paragraph 3C.33.

19. The Committee drew attention to the importance of the activities with regard to the various Security Council sanctions committees and their adequate funding within the approved programme budget.

20. Subject to the above-mentioned amendments, the Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of the programme narrative of section 3 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995.